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STATEMENT BY
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Before the
SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL POLICY MACHINERY

Senator Henry M. Jackson, Chairman

June 14, 1960

Senator Jackson and members of the Subcommittee:

I would like to express my thanks to the Subcommittee for the opportunity of testifying on the subject of the adequacy of our national policy machinery. I have noted the list of distinguished witnesses who have preceded me and can hope to add very little to the evidence already accumulated.

One comment of a general nature may be in order before getting down to particulars. I have noted that most of the prior testimony has dealt with the effectiveness of existing governmental organizations and procedures for formulating and executing national security policy. It occurs to me that the insertion of the word "security" before policy may tend to limit the range of examination by the committee and obscure the fact that security policy is only one important aspect of national policy and is not an end in itself. Security, like safety, tends to have a defensive, negative ring whereas national policy should be a blending of dynamic forces focused upon the overall objectives of the nation. To speak of security policy also suggests a restrictive attention upon military measures whereas national policy properly implies the presence of indispensable non-military components. Thus it would appear to be a broader point of departure for the deliberations of the Subcommittee.

The formulation of national policy, to include security policy, may be said to be the first responsibility of the fountain-head of government. There follows immediately thereafter the requirement for a national strategy which combines in proper proportion all available ways and means to implement the national policy. These ways and means include political, economic, and psychological elements as well as military. Thus, military strategy in proper perspective is but a part of national strategy, and is formulated at a third level in the echelons of national planning.

At all three of these levels -- national policy, national strategy, and military strategy -- there is need for clearly fixed responsibility for planning, execution and follow-up. Often the stress is placed upon planning but execution is the pay-off and the adequacy of execution requires verification. Under our present system, the responsibility for these functions at the level of national policy and strategy rests with the President assisted by his civilian advisers and advisory agencies. For military strategy, the President bears the responsibility as Commander-in-Chief but in practice delegates direct responsibility to the Secretary of Defense assisted by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. It is the adequacy of this total organizational structure which I understand concerns this Subcommittee.

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In my observation, the existing organizational system is inadequate in certain respects for the complex task set before it. Viewed from the position of a service Chief of Staff, the system is most visibly defective in its failure to provide clear guidance for the formulation of military strategy and for the generation of the military forces to implement that strategy. As a result, the Joint Chiefs of Staff have often been at odds over what is expected of the Armed Forces and have been unable to agree on the size and kinds of forces needed to provide the military component of the national strategy.

In the absence of agreement by the military chiefs, economic and budgetary factors have come to play an overriding part in determining military posture. Each year the services receive rigid budget guidelines which control the growth, direction, and evolution of the Armed Forces. These guidelines are often set with little knowledge of their strategic implications.

As a matter of fact, it is very difficult to determine their implications because of the way in which the defense budget is constructed. In spite of the fact that modern war is no longer fought in terms of a separate Army, Navy, and Air Force, nonetheless we still budget vertically in these service terms. Yet if we are called upon to fight, we will not be interested in the services as such. We will be interested rather in task forces, those combinations of Army, Navy, and Air Force which are functional in nature, such as the atomic retaliatory forces, overseas deployments, continental air defense forces, limited war expeditionary forces and the like. But the point is that we do not keep our budget in these terms. Hence it is not an exaggeration to say that we do not know what kind and how much defenses we are buying with any specific budget.

This kind of budgeting makes it hard to determine what our military posture will be at any given time in the future. It would not, however, prevent the determination of actual strength in being at any present moment, provided the forces in being are viewed in functional categories. Some such recurrent appraisal is particularly necessary in view of our world-wide political commitments to some 48 nations. Although these commitments carry serious military implications, there is no standard procedure to my knowledge for comparing military strength and political obligations. We lack a system of politico-military bookkeeping to assure that commitments and capabilities are kept in balance. I suggest that this is an area worthy of the attention of this Subcommittee.

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As a result of the foregoing conditions, we have the strange phenomenon of the partial loss of control of the military in a government where all parties, including the military, are dedicated to the principle of civilian control. The implementation of the principle has been too often confused with the need for layers of civilians between the responsible military chiefs and the seats of decision-making authority. Actually such layering often contributes to the opacity of guidance reaching the military as well as to the filtering out of responsible military advice needed in formulating high policy. True civilian control, on the other hand, should be such as to assure that the military build forces of a size and kind consistent with the approved national policy and capable of providing the President and the Secretary of State with a flexible tool for defense and maneuver. The lack of a clearly defined national strategy, the resulting vagueness of guidance (other than fiscal) provided the military, and the obsolete method of budget-making combine to make difficult if not impossible this meaningful kind of civilian control.

If certain defects are found in our present policy-making machinery, it would be fair to ask for suggestions as to improvement. I would suggest the need for five improvements or changes:

- a A more clearly defined national policy to include a national security policy.
- b A better staff organization for planning and implementing national strategy and for verifying its execution. The revised procedure should include a tie-in between national strategy and the national budget.
- c A defense budget based on operational functions rather than on the military services.
- d A division of the functions of the present Joint Chiefs of Staff between a Defense Chief of Staff and a Supreme Military Council.
- e Clearer guidance for the development of military strategy and the generation of military forces.

As these points are broad generalities, I will illustrate specifically the kind of clearer guidance which I view as badly needed by the military establishment to assure a flexible military strategy appropriate to the threat confronting the United States. Such guidance flowing from the

Commander-in-Chief to the Department of Defense and the military services might read as follows:

"The objective of the military preparations of the United States is to create respect for the strength of the United States without arousing fear of its misuse. That respect should be sufficient to deter military attack on the United States and to discourage aggression in any area of U.S. interest. If deterrence fails, our strength should be sufficient to impose appropriate punishment upon the aggressor.

"In short, U.S. military strength should be such as to impress possible enemies and encourage friends and neutrals but should not inspire fear arising from the nature of its weapons or from the character of the strategy which directs its use.

"To achieve this kind of military strength, the Department of Defense will conform to the following guidance:

"a. The Armed Forces of the United States will be so organized and trained as to have the capability of deterring a general atomic attack on the United States and of dealing a crippling second strike against the aggressor if deterrence fails. The weapons system for retaliation will consist primarily of long range missiles with atomic warheads, firing from mobile or concealed positions removed from important friendly targets. To add to its deterrent effect as well as to its capability of survival, the system will be provided with an active air and anti-missile defense.

"b. Concurrently and with equal priority of effort, the Armed Forces of the United States will be so organized and trained as to have the capability of sustained combat on the ground and at sea, placing primary reliance on the use of non-atomic weapons but having tactical atomic weapons in reserve. These forces will have strategic and tactical mobility to permit prompt and timely intervention in any area of vital U.S. interest.

"c. The role and missions of the military services will be redefined to fix clearly service responsibility for the organization and training of the forces required under subparagraphs a and b above.

"d. To support the foregoing forces the Department of Defense may plan upon receiving an annual sum approximating 10% of the gross national product. For mid-range fiscal planning it will

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submit to the President annually a five year military program for overall approval. This program will define and justify goals for all categories of operational forces required in this period. These goals will be based upon the estimated military threat and the extent of the political commitments of the United States which have military implications. The Department of Defense will justify its annual budget in terms of operational forces required to meet the approved force goals.

"e. The Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense will make an annual report to the President on the adequacy of the military forces in being in relation to the current military threat and to the current commitments which may require the use of military forces for their fulfillment. "

It is believed that some such terse directive as the foregoing would provide appropriate initial guidance to the Department of Defense to assure a flexible military strategy appropriate to our needs. Many interpretative and supplementary decisions would later be required on such matters as the conditions for using atomic, chemical and biological weapons, the policy on maintaining overseas deployments and bases, military aid to allies, and civil defense. The ultimate result would be, I hope, a strategy of flexible response offering many military alternatives to our civilian leadership. Moreover, by the change in budgeting it would assure that we put first things first and that we know better what we are buying for our defense dollars.